

Stress and Anxiety in Children FBC Roswell

Stress – Def'n:

a state of mental tension/worry caused by problems in your life, work, etc.; something that causes strong feelings of worry/anxiety; physical force or pressure

Anxiety - Def'n:

distress; uneasiness; apprehension/tension/worry/fear

- *in and of itself – normal/helpful/motivates us toward our goal
- *too much – can interfere with functioning

The experience of anxiety or stress can compound or snowball and soon the anticipation of the anxiety or stressful situation becomes the first level of the anxiety or stress. Just thinking about the possibility for stress or anxiety becomes a trigger for stress and anxiety.

As parents, we can often feel powerless – we don't know what to do to make the stress or anxiety more manageable; or maybe we try some strategies or skills but they don't seem to help; or we become anxious or stressed dealing with our kids anxieties and stress.

So – what ARE some things that we as parents can do when our kids struggle with anxiety or stress?

Here are some things we can do:

- ***Respond calmly and confidently** – kids look at how we handle
- ***Validate feelings/thoughts** – Perception is Reality
- ***Ask Questions/Ideas** – “I don't know.” “What do you *think*?”
- ***Partialize** – Break the Big Picture into Smaller Pieces
- ***Normalize feelings**
- ***Remind of past successes**
- ***Structure/Consistency** – allow for security within the “knowns”
- ***Nutrition** – Protein/Carb balance – some protein foods contain carbs which can actually help reduce anxiety and increase relaxation (i.e. cheese, milk, whole grain breads, pastas, tofu, cereals). The carbs boost the neurotransmitters to calm us down.

Homework Wars

- ***Throw tantrum together**
- ***Best won with a battle plan – fighting on the same team**
- ***You and your child vs. the homework**
- ***Mirror**
- ***Role Reversal**
- ***Humor/Silly**

Smooth Transitions

- *Structure**
- *Rituals**
- *Follow through**

OTHER INTERVENTIONS:

- *Counseling/CBT/Life Coaching**
- *Hypnosis/Meditation/Relaxation**
- *Groups (coping skills/support)**

Go With Resistance Instead of Against – ride the wave instead of swim against it

Instill Personal POWER over PANIC

Mantras: "In this moment, I choose peace."

Expect Different...Expect Better! ☺

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